

Narrative Evaluations

- 1) *Do you have any practical suggestions for improvements to RBS's online logistics?*
 1. They were excellent. Thank you for all your hard work!
 2. No; everything ran so smoothly!
 3. I do not like dropbox. I would prefer that RBS used another cloud service, google, onedrive, for example.
 4. No. Everything worked smoothly.
 5. No, everything went very smoothly, though I found gather.town a little intimidating.
 6. The class would have benefited from some planned break-out rooms for discussion. I realize that the Gather space was available, but small group sessions with other course participants could have gone a long way to make up for our inability to chat before and after class, and even during the break. Otherwise the Zoom session itself functioned just fine.
 7. No
 8. All in all, I think the Zoom encounter of this went very well. We had very engaged students, staff, and professors who took great advantage of on-line features (screen sharing, trading citations (and jokes) in the chat, and multiple media of communication). I was also glad to see the faculty offering advisement sessions for students and young scholars working on projects. My suggestion, however, is doing a breakout, or even a separate Zoom session--one might stumble upon a private conversation. Nevertheless, this was a great addition for those students.
 9. I thought the online format was handled very well by RBS staff. I was wary of Gather.town as I had never used it, and even though the explanations were very instructive, I still did not make as much of an effort to attend the opening and post-lecture receptions as I would have in person. I did ask a few of my classmates about "meeting" in Gather.town during the closing reception, and was glad that I did as I had a nice chat with them and others who joined our group. It was much easier to use and far less intimidating than I anticipated.
 10. {no response}
 11. {no response}
 12. No, it worked fine.
 13. {no response}
 14. Cocktail parties at GatherTown are even more awkward than real ones (and that's saying something!). That said, I don't know how else to encourage people to meet each other. And, meeting others, really getting to know them, is one of the most valuable aspects of "real" Rare Book School. It's a problem I don't know how to solve. (Sorry!)
 15. I would schedule in the one-on-ones as part of the scheduled curricula. I was lucky enough to get a scheduled slot with the two of them to talk about my

research but not everyone in the group was granted that spot. I am most grateful for the opportunity that I had to talk with them about my research one-on-one.

2) *How would you describe your encounters with RBS staff?*

1. Universally helpful!
2. Highly professional and helpful.
3. Great, thank you very much.
4. Very positive.
5. Wonderful, even remotely. Our class assistant Beth DeBold was particularly wonderful.
6. They were courteous and super helpful.
7. Excellent
8. Everyone was great!
9. Absolutely wonderful!
10. The staff have been so courteous, friendly, and knowledgeable.
11. They were very helpful and kind with my questions.
12. Pleasant and encouraging.
13. {no response}
14. Great.
15. As always, the RBS staff is most wonderful. Even in the virtual setting it was so professional and an incredibly worthwhile and wonderful experience.

3) *If you attended any of our optional evening events, do you feel that they were a good use of your time? Were there any that were particularly important to your RBS experience?*

1. I couldn't make it to extra events this week.
2. I attended the welcoming talk and reception and the Tuesday evening talk. I think they were a good use of my time. Being at home, though, I felt the pull of other family responsibilities and so didn't really interact with others online.
3. Yes, but it is a bit difficult to network this way.
4. Tuesday lecture
5. I attended a few optional events: an introductory session that covered the technical aspects of an online session, Michael Suarez's opening statement, and Alex Hidalgo's lecture. Michael's talk was the most important to me. It is important tradition in starting the week when we can physically gather together, and it was more so in a virtual space. In a time when the idea of community has changed or ceased for many people, it was a very poignant message.
6. I only attended the Tuesday evening presentation, and of course, the welcome on Sunday. I enjoyed the guest lecture, as I have enjoyed other programs put on by RBS via Zoom over the past year. I was unable to participate in the receptions. (It was a challenging week for me due to family issues.)
7. Yes
8. I was glad to pop in. Although, personally, I find Gathertown goofy, I did get to at least communicate a bit. And the Zoom room was great for those most

comfortable in that platform. As this is all new to RBS, there was a learning curve. Fortunately, everyone involved is clever!

9. {no response}
 10. Yes. The lecture was fantastic, generated great discussion, and led to some thoughtful conversations afterwards on Gather.town.
 11. {no response}
 12. I did not attend any.
 13. {no response}
 14. Alex Hidalgo's talk was excellent.
 15. I really appreciated the speaker and opening talk. I also really enjoyed interacting in the virtual rooms. The little touches in the virtual realm with videos and things to read on the coffee shop tables was such a fun experience.
- 4) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Are there any readings that you would like to see added or removed in future years?*
1. Yes, the Dropbox full of sources was great and the recommended readings were pertinent.
 2. I didn't get to all the reading assignments, but everything that I read was useful.
 3. The readings were excellent, I wish that we had gotten them a week earlier.
 4. There were no pre-course reading assignments for this course. Wonderful reading material was presented a couple of days before the course. This was not enough time to read and digest the offerings before the course, and I had no time during the course to do justice to the readings.
 5. There weren't any pre-course reading assignments.
 6. There were no pre-course readings assigned for this course.
 7. Excellent readings. It would be helpful to get them ahead of time
 8. Our course was a seminar format. We had the necessary primary texts under discussion. The secondary readings were all great. I'm a slow reader, so I used them selectively for my purposes. But I enjoyed having some very hard-to-find and hard-to-get materials included. I will be making my copy, because there are some very interesting works I'd like to read at my leisure later. I must also laud the visual materials distributed, and screen shared, by faculty, using their great institutional resources and careful selection. All good. I would have done better with earlier notice, but then I may have missed the first email with the dropbox link. This course, unlike earlier ones I've looked at, didn't have an advanced reading list on the website—unless I missed that too.
 9. {no response}
 10. Yes. There were extensive pre-course readings, all optional. (It's good that the readings were indicated as optional, because some of them were quite long, and they are not absolutely essential for understanding the lectures). The readings consisted of the primary texts and secondary criticism, and were useful background for the course. The primary texts are especially important background for the lectures.
 11. {no response}
 12. Very useful-- I will keep many of them in my Zotero library for teaching.

13. {no response}
14. There were no readings assigned, but it would have been EXTREMELY useful to have had access to the readings that were placed in the DropBox folder much earlier. During the actual week itself, I had very little extra time outside of class to do the readings, and I felt I got less out of the lectures because of it. If I'd had them ahead of time, I would have been able to prepare myself better.
15. It would have been nicer to have more time to read them before the class started. We got them very last minute for this course. That said, once we got them the readings were most helpful.

5) *What are your thoughts on the course workbook and/or other teaching materials distributed during class? Was the content appropriate and useful? Will it continue to be useful for you after the course?*

1. Great selection of materials. I plan to return to some of the secondary sources I didn't get to this week.
2. The course materials were extremely helpful. I made a note of a few items that will also be very useful to assign to students--for example, the article about Montaigne's visit to the Vatican Library.
3. {no response}
4. The virtual format precluded the distribution of hard-copy materials, but the content of the materials presented was appropriate and useful.
5. The teaching materials were very helpful and I'm glad to have them available through Dropbox for almost a year. Because this was not a part-time virtual course I unfortunately still had to work and didn't get a chance to read everything.
6. Yes, I believe they were appropriate and useful. Since we did not have them in advance I would recommend that they be prioritized and perhaps annotated. For example, if a reading is particularly long and we may not have time to read it all, along with the other selections, in the hours before the next class session, a few notes on the key pages to consult would be great (especially since I am a habitual note-taker and that slows me down). And yes, I do expect to consult some of these materials again in the future, in my work.
7. We did not get this
8. We didn't have those sorts of materials. But I will say that additional reading material was added to the class as the conversation dynamically evolved over the course of the week. This was great!
9. {no response}
10. The powerpoints were quite detailed and helpful. I might use them as a reference.
11. {no response}
12. Yes and yes. As above stated.
13. {no response}
14. Yes, fantastic, with the caveat (see above) that it would have been super to have them at least a week or 2 before the class started!

15. I really found the materials distributed throughout the course most helpful. Also, the way we got a virtual view of materials from Penn was really neat and unexpected in this virtual format -- a fun surprise.

6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your RBS course?*

Did you walk away with any "aha!" moments, new ideas, or project plans?

1. I became very interested in the circulation of virtual texts (or the virtual circulation of texts?), which we talked about in connection with Don Quixote.
2. The lecture and article on the 7 publishing lives of Shakespeare was especially strong at demonstrating why and how to investigate a text's material forms.
3. Yes, I feel more confident to teach about rare books, and I think I can now apply for a BSA scholarship.
4. I plan to incorporate the knowledge and material content into my dissertation.
5. This is the first course I've taken at RBS that was not really about the physicality of the book, but rather the text of the book and its implications. The subjects we discussed really exemplified the fluidity of an "original" text and its creator(s), its different forms, and how those forms are created in reaction to current and past social-historical events. These ideas are hugely important to my work in New Orleans, a place that has been populated by indigenous peoples, then settled by the French, owned by the Spanish, transferred to the United States, a part of the Confederacy but mostly a part of the Union throughout the Civil War, etc. Throughout most of this time, there remained a strong affinity for the performing arts, and to a lesser degree, the literary arts. It will be interesting to review the holdings at The Historic New Orleans Collections with these new considerations. Additionally, it is interesting we discussed Don Quixote at a time when I, as an aging semi-professional dancer, am rehearsing for a performance of excerpts from Don Quixote the ballet, already based on segments of Cervantes's complete work, and have learned about further omissions by various companies based on the pedagogy taught by those companies. These omissions have changed the nature of the original work by Petipa and Minkus.
6. The new knowledge that I acquired will help me to provide even better support for the history of the book course that is taught in conjunction with our Special Collections Department, especially since I have little experience with Early Modern literature. I am particularly interested in learning more about period-specific trends, such as the popularity of maps in literary texts.
7. Toward my dissertation
8. I read for History of the Book in grad school a quarter century ago. This course was great as review, catching up on the state of the field, and to learn from top scholars, as well as fellow students. It was a great pleasure, and I walk away feeling refreshed, in several of the connotations of that word. This will help my current and my upcoming projects.
9. {no response}
10. I am beginning to appreciate the value of extensive bibliography around editions, translations, revisions etc. of texts. I think I'm going to use the ideas around mapping and how that is a new window into analyzing the text in my own writing

project. Considering how different indigenous words have come to be reinterpreted and transformed in discourse across the Atlantic also is a relevant linguistic phenomenon for topics I'm interested in researching.

11. {no response}
 12. I plan to incorporate some of the content I learned in my own lectures to classes at the College. I also foresee future collaborations with our college museum between texts in Special Collections and objects, paintings, in the museum.
 13. {no response}
 14. So many "aha" moments. It's changed how I think about texts, in context, culturally, linguistically, historically...
 15. There were several moments throughout this course that I experienced "a-ha" moments. This helped move my doctoral plans forward.
- 7) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*
1. Yes, the course was very well organized and did what was promised.
 2. Yes, I now have a strong sense of the many ways in which texts are mobile and connected, and I can trace and account for these mobilities in my work.
 3. {no response}
 4. The course fulfilled the course description and syllabus introduction statements. What I learned exceeded my expectations.
 5. John Pollack and Roger Chartier were both incredible instructors and made everything very clear and attainable. I definitely learned more than I thought I would!
 6. I wasn't quite sure what to expect from the course description, and perhaps should have reached out with questions. I think it is important to make it clear that the authors and texts discussed are all European. This phrase could be misleading: "How did certain works become 'globalized'?" I had hoped to learn more about how indigenous languages/stories and representational practices were "translated" to European texts and images. I was not disappointed in the content, just a little surprised.
 7. Yes
 8. Yes. And yes. And a bit more.
 9. {no response}
 10. Yes, the course largely matched the description. I thought there might be some more in-class discussion that introduces some of the projects students have been working on. I also thought from the description that we would spend more time talking about different words from indigenous people's languages and how those were translated and transcribed, but we only spent one class talking about that.
 11. {no response}
 12. Yes.
 13. {no response}
 14. 1) Yes, very much so. 2) Yes, although I wish I'd been better prepared (see above)
 15. Absolutely, this course was absolutely phenomenal. It is my favorite RBS course that I have taken.

8) *Are there other ways in which the course could have been improved?*

1. I think more space for discussion and questions *within* the course period would have helped me feel more connected to the course. (Q&A started after course time, and I usually had another meeting that I had to go to -- plus, 2+ hours of attention on Zoom is a big ask!)
2. N/A
3. I would have preferred to spend more time seeing books and less time on lecture.
4. Definitely need the readings several weeks in advance of the course.
5. We could have spent more hours learning from Pollack and Chartier. But no matter the time allotted, the ideas covered in this course are worth life-long learning.
6. More time would be great. I learned from other people's questions, and would like to have had more opportunities to get their perspectives on various topics. As I suggested above, some break-out conversations mid-way through the day might be beneficial.
7. {no response}
8. I'm going to hijack this box to note that I would not have been able to attend this if not on distance instruction—I'm taking care of elders. I would just suggest honing the on-line format for this type of seminar, which opens RBS up to those who could attend (or teach) in person. So I'd say, keep up the good work.
9. {no response}
10. There might be some more time for questions so as to receive some additional rephrasings and perspectives on the material. Viewing the items from Kislak was amazing, and having some more time for structured discussion on how the items relate to some of the key ideas from the lectures would have been good. Getting to hear lectures spread a little more uniformly between instructors would also be interesting.
11. {no response}
12. M. Chartier's accent, charming though it is, was hard to understand at times. I know he can't help it, so I was happy to have running transcriptions. (That provided a certain humor of its own!)
13. {no response}
14. Advance reading! And, the 10-hour format is too crunched. Roger and John very generously gave of their own time outside of class (doing office hours before class Tuesday-Friday, keeping the Zoom open during the break, and giving us an extra half-hour of Q&A time at the end of each day), but it still wasn't really enough time. (Although I suspect I'd say the same thing even if the class had been a full week in person! Roger and John both are so charming, and such polymaths!)
15. Having the course reading materials for an additional week would have proven most helpful.

9) *Who might benefit the most from taking this RBS course?*

1. I think people new to the ideas of circulation, adaptation, and versions would benefit the most, or those who are not yet familiar with how to look for

information in early print books (i.e., pay attention to the title page!). As someone who works on these themes in my research, I sometimes felt that the information (while excellent) was a familiar story for me personally.

2. Scholars at all career levels looking for new research projects.
3. {no response}
4. Anyone with an interest in Early Modern culture and history
5. I immediately thought scholars of Early Modern Europe, but am second-guessing that. Now I think rare book curators and other library professionals would benefit the most from this course. Scholars might have more accessibility to these concepts and time to explore them, especially if their work directly related to the time period. I am very grateful for taking this course because it provides information and ideas that can become secondary to the actual custodianship of a physical collection and providing the institution with the support it needs for specific projects.
6. Special Collections curators and staff whose areas of expertise lie outside the Early Modern period
7. {no response}
8. I think this seminar was a great boon for the grad students and early career scholars. Historians, literature students, EM library people. But as one of the seniors, I think I got similar benefits.
9. {no response}
10. People who are interested in the early modern period, particularly canonical works across western Europe, and the field of critical bibliography. People interested in other related fields could benefit, but will need to do some more work connecting what they research to the course material, which seemed quite focused on these two areas.
11. {no response}
12. Faculty, curators, students, and anyone with an interest in untold histories of people.
13. {no response}
14. Oh, goodness. Certainly anyone dealing with any kind of indigenous materials; historians; anyone working on (or curious about) the reception and transmission of texts.
15. This course is best for an early modernist interested in the passage of "the text" and what that means to a materialistic, historical, and cultural understanding of the period.

10) Do you feel that you got your money's worth?

1. n/a - I did not pay!
2. Absolutely.
3. Oh yes!
4. Absolutely.
5. Very much so, and I think my institution will benefit very much from my attendance in this course.
6. Yes. This was a week well spent.

7. {no response}
8. Yes.
9. {no response}
10. {deleted response}
11. {no response}
12. Absolutely.
13. {no response}
14. Yes. (Ish. I would have loved the class to be longer. And, if John and Roger had NOT given us so much extra time, it would have felt woefully inadequate.)
15. This course really helped my doctoral research. This was the best course to spend my RBS scholarship on.

11) *On a scale of 1–10 with 10 being most likely, how likely are you to recommend this course to others?*

1. 7
2. 10
3. 10
4. 10
5. 10
6. 10
7. 8
8. 10
9. 10
10. 6
11. 9
12. 9
13. {no response}
14. 10
15. 10

12) *If your course had any virtual field trips or guest speakers, do you feel that they were time well spent?*

1. n/a
2. N/A
3. {no response}
4. Not applicable
5. We did not have any. John Pollack was able to provide a virtual show and tell with some books and maps, and did an excellent job.
6. N/A
7. {no response}
8. N/A
9. {no response}
10. n/a
11. {no response}
12. N/A

13. {no response}
14. N/A
15. N/A

13) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. Again, I recommend this course for those whom this material is largely unfamiliar. Because it is such a short course and each topic gets only one session, we didn't get into super-specialist territory.
2. Brush up on your European languages!
3. {no response}
4. {no response}
5. Make time for the course readings, no matter what!
6. {no response}
7. {no response}
8. See above.
9. {no response}
10. Don't be afraid to ask questions, get to know your classmates and instructors in Gather.town/outside of class, and have conversations about the material with different people so as to get as much as you can out of lectures.
11. {no response}
12. no
13. {no response}
14. {no response}
15. The only thing I would consider changing in this course is the amount of time we had with the reading material before the class started.

14) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*

1. So well organized and cogent! I loved the glimpses of the real books at Penn. Thanks to John, Roger, and Beth for such a smooth experience.
2. Texts are always on the move.
3. Time well spent.
4. I have taken 15 courses over the years, and the Rare Book School experience always exceeds my high bar of expectations.
5. I can't and have never been very good at expressing myself in words. This virtual year is different and there are things I miss about meeting in person and the camaraderie that comes with it, but I really couldn't have asked for a better experience given the circumstances. The quality and mission of Rare Book School does not wane!
6. Simply this: I hope that I can take more courses in the future.
7. {no response}
8. Don't worry, you can sleep on Saturday!
9. {no response}

10. Thinking about books and what is in them (physically and idea-wise) with other people is so exciting!
11. {no response}
12. I am out of words.....
13. {no response}
14. Pollack shows the book. / Chartier talks on and on. / Heaven feels like this.
15. Like always, Rare Book School was the highlight of this summer!

Student Data

Number of Respondents: 15 (of 22)

How did you arrange for time off to attend this course?

1. I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule.
2. I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule.
3. My institution/employer gave me professional leave time.
4. I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule.
5. My institution/employer gave me professional leave time.
6. My institution/employer gave me professional leave time.
7. I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule.
8. I am self-employed, and can arrange my own schedule.
9. I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule.
10. I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule.
11. I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule.
12. My institution/employer gave me professional leave time.
13. I am self-employed, and can arrange my own schedule.
14. I am self-employed, and can arrange my own schedule.
15. I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule.

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

1. I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive all of my tuition expenses.
2. My institution/employer paid 100% of my tuition costs.
3. I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive all of my tuition expenses.
4. I paid 100% of my tuition costs myself.
5. My institution/employer paid 100% of my tuition costs.
6. My institution/employer paid 100% of my tuition costs.
7. I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive all of my tuition expenses.
8. I paid 100% of my tuition costs myself.
9. I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive all of my tuition expenses.
10. My institution/employer paid 100% of my tuition costs.
11. I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive all of my tuition expenses.
12. My institution/employer paid 100% of my tuition costs.
13. I paid 100% of my tuition costs myself.
14. I paid 100% of my tuition costs myself.

15. I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive all of my tuition expenses.

Not including this year, how many RBS courses have you attended?

1. This is my first course.
2. 2
3. This is my first course.
4. 10+
5. 2
6. This is my first course.
7. This is my first course.
8. This is my first course.
9. This is my first course.
10. This is my first course.
11. This is my first course.
12. 1
13. 8
14. 9
15. 2

Which of the following best describes your current occupation?

1. Professional educator: Assistant professor
2. Professional educator: Assistant professor
3. Library discipline: Special collections librarian
4. Student working towards a/an: Ph.D./D.Phil.
5. Library discipline: Curator
6. Library discipline: Special collections librarian
7. Student working towards a/an: Ph.D./D.Phil.
8. Other Occupations/Vocations: Post-doctoral fellow/researcher/scholar
9. Student working towards a/an: Ph.D./D.Phil.
10. Student working towards a/an: Ph.D./D.Phil.
11. Student working towards a/an: Ph.D./D.Phil.
12. Professional educator: Lecturer/adjunct
13. Book Trades: Other
14. Book Trades: Other
15. Student working towards a/an: Ph.D./D.Phil.